

NOVEMBER 1990

Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat *Incorporated.*

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

- Meeting Nov. 2 Stella Bedggood Memorial Lecture
"Early Botanists of Australia"-Friends
Meeting Dec. 7 of The Botanical Gardens, Melbourne
Caring for Native Animals - B. Perry
Excursion Nov. 9-11 Laanecoorie Reservoir - Campout
or day visits
Excursion Nov. 25 Mount Beckwith

GOLDEN
WHISTLER



President: Mr K Hammond Ph.053 394534
Vice Pres: Miss H Burgess 312210
Secretary: Mr J Gregurke 394993
Treasurer: Mrs F Williamson 327631
Editor: Mr L Fink 052 861319

Meetings as specified are held at the School of Mines and Industries, Lydlard Street Sth., Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m.
EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE FROM CROCKERS, cnr. STURT AND ARMSTRONG STS., BALLARAT, at 9.30 a.m. for FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 p.m. for HALF DAY*



Field Reports: October Meeting

- Ken McDonnell - One male and two female Magpies are tending two active nests about 10 metres apart. Grey Currawong also nesting.
- John Gregurke - Sooty Oystercatcher at Wilson's Promontory probing beak into sandy beach.
- Kit Williamson - Near Anakie 2 koalas seen 2 metres above the ground. 20 species of plants flowering in small area.
- Frank Harrap - Flock of 50 Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoo at Mt Helen. Campbelltown area has good variety of birds but Golden Wattles are dying in some areas.
- Pat Murphy - Mayfly orchid flowering in bushland south of Ballarat.
- Ken Hammond - Galahs no longer working hollow at St Patricks Point (neither are the starlings). Galahs also seen in Fairyland area.
- Lyndsay Fink - Wedge-tailed Eagle caught and fed on Raven at Meredith.

Dates for your Diary

November 9th-11th: Club Camp at Laanecoorie - details in newsheet.

November 17th: Working bee to clear fence line at Linton. Bring tools such as wire cutters, axe, etc. Pack your lunch if you are able to stay. Meet at 12 Pleasant St Sth, 9am.

November 25th: Meet at Crocker's Corner, 9.30am for excursion to Mt Beckwith

November 27th 8pm: Committee Meeting at Murphy's, 1320 Dana St

CAMPBELLTOWN EXCURSION

Sunday 7th October, 1990

The club excursion to Campbelltown has become an annual event of our calendar but each year different aspects are the highlights. This is due to the variation in weather and the preliminary scouting of our leaders. Thanks to Frank Harrap for leading us once again.

This year the bush has dried out quickly. The display of orchids and other plants was very subdued compared with last year. We saw Pink fingers, Musky Caladenia, Bronze Caladenia, Greencomb Spider Orchid, Mosquito Orchid, Wallflower Orchid, Waxlips, Greenhoods and Beard Orchids; but usually only a few plants rather than massed clumps.

Many of the herbaceous plants were showing water stress and the leaf litter crunched under our feet. Golden Wattles appear to be severely affected by a parasites, many plants have few green leaves remaining.

Many birds were seen and heard during the outing. By the end of the day the list totalled around 40 species. We had not moved away from the cars at our first stop when we heard the rolling call of an Olive-backed Oriole. The bird soon perched in a tree overhead. The call of the Crested Bellbird came from further away. A Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike was beginning to build a nest 6 metres above the ground on a nearly horizontal fork of a eucalypt. A Spotted Pardalote flew up from a mound of soil in which several tunnels nest tunnels were found.

We stopped for lunch near a dam on the southern edge of the Sandon Forest. Little Pied Cormorants were perched in a dead tree above the water. Black and Wood Duck were swimming on the water. A Little Grebe was leaping up from the surface to catch low flying insects.

During the afternoon two more nesting birds were found. Eastern Rosellas had 5 white, rounded eggs on the ground at the bottom of a hollow strainer post. A Jacky Winter was sitting on 2 eggs in a small shallow nest built on dead twigs 3 metres high. She flew a short distance away but soon returned to the eggs. JG

Natural History Crossword No.21 by Tantulus.

Across

1 Native to an area (7) 5 Six footers (7) 9 Beginning flight (6,3) 10 Snare (3) 11 Aluminium, sulphur and oxygen too! (4) 12 Part of calyx (5) 13 Plantation softwood (4) 16 Hand harvesting tool (6) 19 Herb enjoyed by goats? (6) 20 Rodent (3) 21 Mammalian coated (6) 22 Gum, resin (6) 26 Continuous pain (4) 27 A squirrel does its nuts (5) 28 One of 5ac. (1,3) 32 Bituminous substance (3) 33 Possums (9 or 4-5) 34 Hunting Leopard (7) 35 Highest mountain (7)

Down

1 Snares (7) 2 Ocean dams (5) 3 Animal valued for its fur (4) 4 Spices (6) 5 A mare is, if pregnant (2,4) 6 Bone (4) 7 Food flavourer (9) 8 Dogs, Red ----- (7) 14 Haemorrhage (5) 15 Light food (5) 17 Animal found in orchestra! (anag.9) 18 Night flier (3) 21 Frenzied (7) 23 A cow does its cud (5,2) 24 Natural stiffener (6) 25 Citrus fruit (6) 29 Salty water (5) 30 Young animal (4) 31 Eye affliction (4)

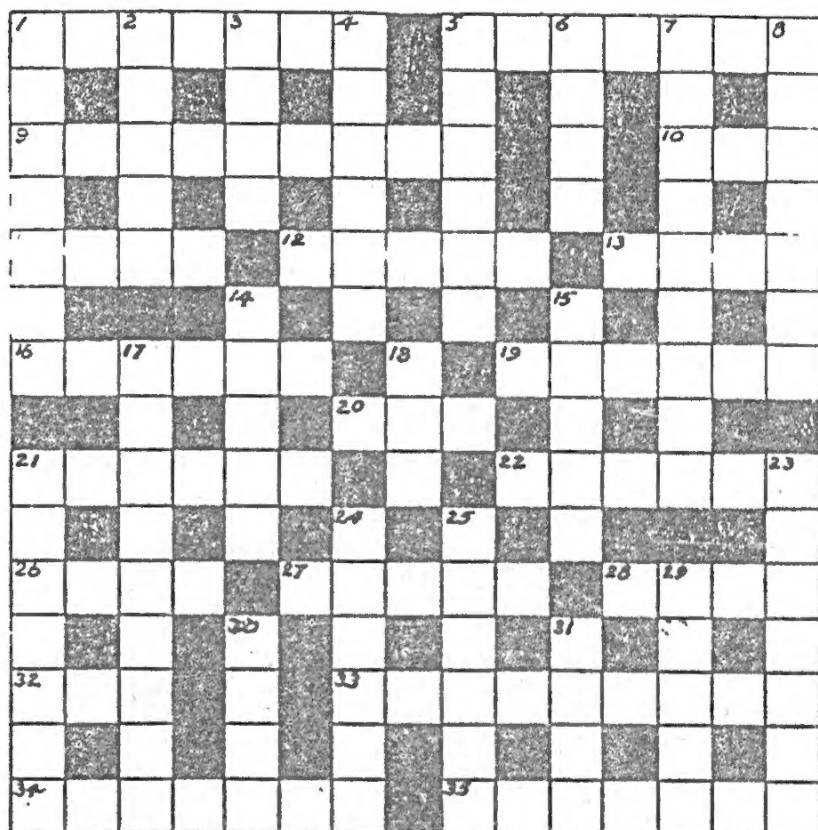


Photo Flora presentation.

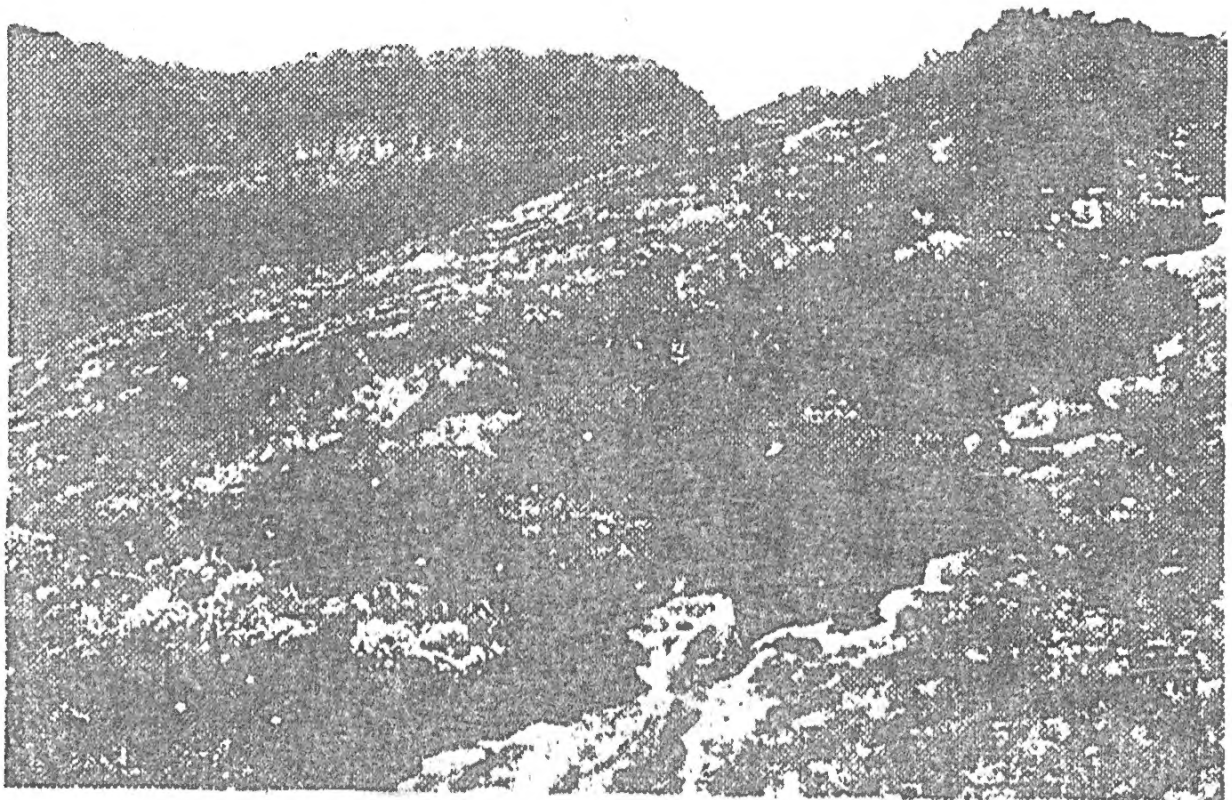
The October meeting highlight was the Photo Flora night, certainly an old one but well worth seeing again, it was in fact a 1978 one; These were a project of the Native Plants Preservation Society.

There were 200 slides of wild flowers, birds, animals, insects and others of interest.

The slides were exceptional and an appreciative audience was, I think, captivated by their beauty and interest. Many of these slides were of very common and oft seen subjects from Victoria and most of the other States.

There isn't any reason why we could not get a selection of slides for another night, I am sure we would have a very interesting and enjoyable evening.

Mount Zero, at the northern end of the Grampians with some of the fascinating plant associations on the back-slope of the uplifted sandstone.



Laanecoorie Campout November 9-11, 1990

Join us on Ballarat show weekend for the Club Campout at Laanecoorie Weir Caravan Park. The caravan park is on the west side of the Loddon River at the north end of Laanecoorie Reservoir. The most direct route is through Clunes and Carisbrook.

Ample powered and unpowered sites are available. If you wish to stay in a cabin, then you should book as soon as possible by telephoning the Park, 054-357303. If you are unable to come for the entire weekend then consider a day trip - we will be leaving the caravan park at 9.30am on each day.

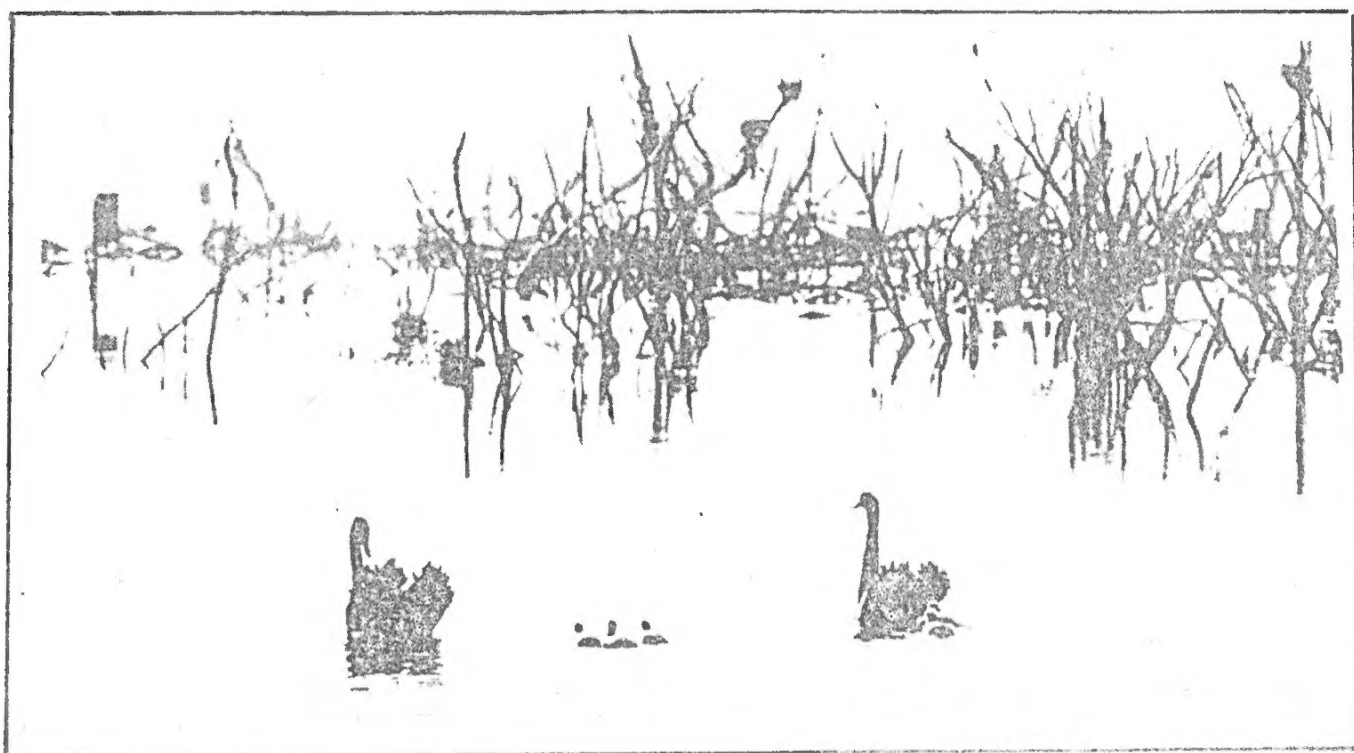
If you would like to borrow a canoe, arrange with John Gregurke.

Proposed Program

Friday Arrive and set up camp whenever you can.

Saturday Day trip to forest area around Tarnagulla and Waanyarra Cemetery. If we return early we could canoe around the bird nesting area of Laanecoorie.
Evening camp fire.

Sunday Canoeing on Laanecoorie. Walks along the Loddon River or bushland on edge of reservoir.



Book Review: "A Guide to Indigenous Trees and Shrubs
of the Ballarat Region"

The Department of Conservation and Environment has published a booklet listing indigenous trees and shrubs suitable for planting in the Ballarat region. The guide has been produced to assist landholders and community groups.

The book describes six planting zones each further subdivided into a number of sites based on geology, soil type, topography and climate. A list of suitable species for each particular site is then given.

More information is given about many of the indigenous species. This includes identification, site preference, distribution, tolerances, seed maturity and uses. The diagrams for identification are taken from "Native Trees and Shrubs of South-Eastern Australia" by Costermans and supplemented by distinguishing features to separate similar local species. Of special interest to field naturalists will be the detailed local distribution and the notes about wildlife significance of each tree.

Some interesting information gleaned from the book follows. One kilogram of River Bottle Brush seed contain 2-4,000,000 very fine, dust like seeds. The seed of Prickly Moses is much bigger with 30,000 seeds per kilogram. Plants of Silver Banksia variation in height, ability to produce suckers, fire tolerance and the presence or absence of a lignotuber depending on the source of the seed. A rough barked variety of Manna Gum occurs on sandy soils at Dereel, Haddon and Mt Erip. The easily split timber of Silver Wattle was used in the past for furniture, clothes pegs and shoe heels.

You may borrow "A Guide to Indigenous Trees and Shrubs of the Ballarat Region" from the club library cupboard.

BOTANICAL NOTES.

For some years we have been presenting a very brief account of some of the families to which many native vascular plants in the Ballara t area are said " to belong".

The families discussed are all included in the Group Dicotyledons (actually a " class "). Another Group, Monocotyledons must now be given some attention. There are fewer families in this group.

The typical differences between these two Groups may be summarized :-

Dicotyledons

Seed - The embryo plant in the seed
is attached to two seed-leaves
or cotyledons e.g. a bean

Structure - Plants woody or herb-
aceous

Flower - Floral parts usually in
4s or 5s

Leaves - Venation mostly retic-
ulate

Root system - Often a tap-root
and well developed
lateral root system

Major examples -
Acacias, Eucalypts

Monocotyledons

The embryo plant in
the seed is attached
to one seed-leaf or
cotyledon e.g. wheat

Plants almost aalways
herbaceous

Floral parts in 3s

Venation mostly
parallel

Usually fibrous

Grasses, orchids,
Palms.

h.h.